

Conservation Security Program (CSP) Pastureland Benchmark Assessment

Name: _____ Farm Unit(s) _____

Worksheet Instructions

The minimum level of treatment required for pastures that are enrolled in CSP is a grazing plan which achieves the following:

- Forage availability in balance with livestock numbers
- Grazing distribution through proper placement of watering facilities, fence alignment, salting, or herding technique
- Livestock access to rivers, streams, and other surface waters is managed to protect water quality
- Proper timing and duration of livestock use to protect and enhance plant health
- Minimum of two years of written records documenting these requirements

If you believe that you meet the minimum treatment level requirements, please complete the attached Grazing Lands Inventory Worksheet (an example is provided to assist you) and the attached list of pasture management questions. This information will help us with assessing the benchmark condition for this land use.

*** The pasture management questions consist of “**KEY**” questions and “**NOT KEY**” questions. **KEY questions will be used to evaluate basic eligibility for Tier 1 of the CSP program.** Key questions deal with resource concerns that must be evaluated during the interview and satisfactorily addressed for the fields to be enrolled. “**NOT KEY**” questions will be used to determine eligibility for Tier 2 or 3 and/or for eligibility for certain enhancement practices.

Example Grazing Lands Inventory Worksheet Grazing Records

Management Unit	Acres	Livestock		Date In	Forage Height	Date Out	Forage Height
		Type	Number				
Ex. 1 Tall Fescue	Ex. 160	Ex. Yearlings	Ex. 40	Ex. 5/1/05	Ex. 8 inches	Ex. 9/30/05	Ex. 10 inches
Ex. 2 Orchard Grass	Ex. 160	Ex. Cow/Calf	Ex. 20	Ex. 4/15/05	Ex. 8 inches	Ex. 10/15/05	Ex. 2 inches

Notes: Ex. Yearlings weighed 550 pounds before going to grass and weighed 800 pounds after being removed 9/30/05. Cows had spring calves on them born around March 15. Cows weighed 1050 pounds as an average. Key forage is the species being managed for within the unit.

Grazing Record							
Applicant Name:				Total Pasture Acres:			
Farm or Tract:							
Management Unit	Acres	Livestock		Date In	Forage Height	Date Out	Forage Height
		Type	Number				

Explain grazing system:

Note: Use additional continuation sheets if necessary. In lieu of completing the above table applicant may attaché their own existing records if it contains this information.

PASTURE LAND CSP BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS		
APPLICANT NAME:		Farm or Tract:
***	PASTURELAND – GRAZING PLAN QUESTIONS	
Key	In the offered acres, are there areas of the grazing unit which are either under utilized or over grazed?	Yes ____ No ____
Key	Do grazing animals have limited access to streams or grazing lands which contain lakes, ponds or other sensitive riparian or water quality areas?	Yes ____ No ____
Key	Do all fields have current soil tests (5 yrs or newer) and do you apply nutrients according to results?	Yes ____ No ____
Not Key	Do you split apply annual applications of nitrogen on your pastures?	Yes ____ No ____
Key	If you apply animal waste on pastureland, do you apply according to manure test values and the West Virginia CSP Livestock Waste Utilization Checklist?	Yes ____ No ____
Not Key	Do you stockpile forages for winter grazing? How many acres :	Yes ____ No ____
Not Key	Do you have warm season grasses as part of your pasture? How many acres:	Yes ____ No ____
Not Key	Do you use alternative annual forages (brassiccas, etc. to extend grazing period? How many acres:	Yes ____ No ____
Not Key	Do you use a rotational grazing system and if so explain how many paddocks and/or rotation intervals:	Yes ____ No ____

Key	Where and how is the desired forage monitored to aid your ability to evaluate the effectiveness of your grazing management plan (ie: forage analysis)? <i>Explain</i>	
***	PASTURELAND – SOIL AND WATER MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS	
Key	Are excessive soil compacted or bare areas present on offered acres due to livestock concentration, livestock travel, feeding areas, water facilities or access to water areas?	Yes ____ No ____
Key	Are active gullies present on offered pastureland (i. e. not supporting growing or live vegetation in the bottoms of the gully)?	Yes ____ No ____
Key	If access roads or animal trails are present and actively used in offered pastureland, are they maintained to prevent accelerated erosion? <i>Explain:</i>	Yes ____ No ____
Key	What is the minimum height (inches) of the vegetation during the growing season and the dormant season?	Growing Season ____ Dormant Season ____
Key	Do livestock have access to abandoned or actively used water wells, sinkholes, or other direct conduits to ground water?	Yes ____ No ____
Key	How is winter feeding accomplished to prevent erosion and compaction? <i>Explain and locate on farm plan map:</i>	
Key	How are animals watered? <i>Explain and locate on farm plan map:</i>	

***	PASTURELAND – PEST MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS	
Key	Do you apply herbicides/pesticides on offered pastureland acres? <i>If yes, explain what are used, how it is applied, and what the target pests are.</i>	Yes ____ No ____
Not Key	Do offered acres contain state identified noxious weeds or undesirable invasive or alien species?	Yes ____ No ____

Comments:

Certification Statement:

The above information is correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that if requested, I can provide a minimum of two years of documentation to support the information provided above.

Name: _____ Date: _____

I have reviewed this assessment and the answers meet CSP pastureland enrollment criteria and are consistent with the farm records provided for review during the verification interview.

NRCS Representative: _____ Date: _____

Grazing Record-Continuation Page

Applicant Name:				Total Pasture Acres:			
Farm or Tract:							
Management Unit	Acres	Livestock		Date	Forage Height	Date	Forage Height
Key Forage		Type	Number	In	Inches	Out	Inches

Note: Use additional continuation sheets if necessary. In lieu of completing the above table applicant may attaché their own existing records if it contains this information.